



September 16, 2013

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Modernizing the E-Rate Program for Schools and Libraries, WC Docket No. 13-184

Dear Secretary Dortch:

I am writing on behalf of the more than 1.5 million members of the American Federation of Teachers to express our support for the Federal Communications Commission proposal for a modernized E-rate program. A change to the E-rate program is necessary for the successful implementation of President Obama's ConnectED initiative, which will bring broadband Internet access into classrooms across the country.

It is imperative that we provide teachers and students with the highest-quality instructional materials and pedagogy, as well as the opportunities to adapt new knowledge and tools to support improved instruction. The incorporation of technology into preK-12 teaching and learning is essential to providing all children with an education relevant to the age in which we live. Updating the E-rate program presents a powerful opportunity to provide access to technology that will enhance teaching and learning and reduce educational inequality.

Research shows that schools serving disadvantaged and minority students often have less access to high-speed equipment, communication technology, and technical and administrative support, limiting the potential of technology for enhancing complex thinking and advanced achievement. Our students are expected to meet standards that are more challenging and rigorous than what we have had in the past. Now is the time to invest in our school's infrastructure and create the conditions they need to be successful 21st century learners.

We strongly support the FCC's recommendation to raise the e-rate cap until such time as the goal of high-speed, broadband access in the nation's classrooms is reached.

Sincerely,

Kristor W. Cowan
Director, Legislation

RW:emc opeiu#2 afl-cio

American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

AFT Teachers
AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
AFT Healthcare

555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
202-879-4400
www.aft.org

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Loretta Johnson
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Francine Lawrence
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENTS

Shelvy Y. Abrams
Mary J. Armstrong
Karen Aronowitz
Barbara Bowen
Linda Bridges
Elsie P. Burkhalter
Stacey Caruso-Sharpe
Kathy A. Chavez
Lee Cutler
Edward Doherty
Kathleen M. Donahue
Thomas A. Doohar
Marietta A. English
Eric Feaver
Francis J. Flynn
Andy Ford
David Gray
Judy Hale
David Hecker
Richard C. Iannuzzi
Keith R. Johnson
Jerry T. Jordan
Dennis Kelly
Susan M. Kent
Ted Kirsch
Karen GJ Lewis
Louis Malfaro
John McDonald
Daniel J. Montgomery
Michael Mulgrew
Maria Neira
Ruby J. Newbold
Candice Owley
Andrew Pallotta
Joshua Pechthalt
David J. Quolke
Mary Cathryn Ricker
Sandra Schroeder
Phillip H. Smith
Tim Stoelb
Ann Twomey
Adam Urbanski

